

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,
BURLEY-IN-WHARFEDALE.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

1904.

***With the Compliments of the
Medical Officer of Health.***

BURLEY-IN-WHARFEDALE,

February 1st, 1905..

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present to you my report on the sanitary condition of your district for the past year.

The climatic conditions during the year were a great improvement on those prevalent during 1903, and the general health of the district was on the whole better than the average. I regret to have to report that the trade of the district suffered from the same influences as the country at large, and that some distress was caused. This was largely remedied by the committee which you formed to provide work for the unemployed, and the worst of the period was tided over. The prospects are better for the present year, and I trust the improved conditions will develop into a wave of prosperity.

Building operations have not been very active, but several better-class houses have been completed, and some of them are occupied. There appear to be as many cottage houses

as are wanted, for there are a few empty, and I do not anticipate that any more will be required to be built for some time. A great improvement has come over the village in this respect during the last ten years, for at one time some degree of overcrowding was observed, and there can be no doubt that this has tended to the general good. Epidemics are rare, typhoid fever (at one time prevalent every Autumn) is almost unknown, and phthisis is on the decrease—a disease which half-a-century ago caused one third of the mortality of the village.

POPULATION.

The population of the district in 1901 was 3,310. In the years since many families have removed and others have taken their place. It is somewhat difficult to estimate the exact number at present, and for the purposes of the following statistics I have assumed the population to be 3,400 in the middle of the year. This does not include the staff and inmates of the Scalebor Park Retreat.

BIRTHS.

It is my duty once more to chronicle a low birth rate. In the year 1903 we had the lowest rate ever recorded in the village, viz., 19·7 per 1,000; and the rate for the past year is only fractionally better—20 per 1,000. The birth rate for the district has been steadily declining for

some years, and in this respect has been following the example of that of the country generally. The rate for the *country* districts in 1904 being 26·8, and for the whole of England and Wales 27·9, the lowest on record.

RECENT BIRTH RATES.

1903	...	...	19·7	per 1,000	living.
1902	...	...	24·5	„	„
1901	...	...	26	„	„
1898	...	...	27·7	„	„
1897	...	...	29	„	„
1894	...	...	30·3	„	„

The births recorded were 68 in number, 33 being males and 35 females.

DEATHS.

The death rate for the past year is more satisfactory, and one which indicates a high state of sanitary efficiency. The number of deaths registered was 57, 24 males and 33 females. Of this number 12 were those of non-residents who died in the West Riding County Retreat at Scalebor Park, and one was that of an infant prematurely born. From these we arrive at a death rate equal to 12·9 per 1,000 for the year. This is slightly greater than the rate of the previous year, but is lower than the average of recent years. The death rate for the whole of England and Wales in 1904 was 16·2, and for *country* districts 15·3.

RECENT DEATH RATES.

1903	...	...	12	per 1,000 living.
1902	...	...	14·2	„ „
1901	...	...	11	„ „
1900	...	...	16	„ „

AGE AT DEATH.

Of the residents of the village, the age at which death occurred was: 5 under 1 year; 3 between 5 and 15; 1 between 15 and 25; 16 between 25 and 65; and 20 over 65 years of age, 7 of these attaining the age of 80 and upwards. The mean age at death was 54·9 years, a very high average.

The rate of infant mortality is equal to 73·6 per 1,000 of the children born, and is a very satisfactory record, as the rate for the whole country is 146. It is most gratifying to sanitarians that this rate should be low, more especially with a low birth rate, for it means that more care is exercised in the rearing of tender infants, and that many survive who would otherwise perish. The record for the district has been gradually improving in this respect, and more attention is being given by mothers to the feeding of infants brought up without the aid of their natural food. Gross carelessness is rarely noticed, and every mother is carefully instructed in the correct way of feeding her

children. This question has agitated neighbouring communities during the past year, and it has been deemed expedient to offer premiums to induce parents to exercise more attention in the important details. There is one matter in this connection which requires remark, and that is, I do not think young children are taken out sufficiently often into the open air. They ought to spend most of the hours of daylight outside, except in the most inclement of weather. The fear of "catching cold" is greatly exaggerated, and it is a matter of common observation that children suffer less from bronchitis and other respiratory complaints when they are regularly taken out than when they are immured all day in stuffy kitchens and spend the night in unventilated bedrooms.

CAUSE OF DEATH.

A classified table of the causes of all deaths is inserted at the end of this report. One noticeable feature is the entire absence of any serious infectious or zymotic disease. Last year I had to record one death only from infectious disease, viz., whooping cough, and in the previous year there was not even one. One death in three years from zymotic disease is a tribute to the perfection of your sanitary system, and is a record unequalled in the series of reports which have annually been presented to you for more than thirty years.

For the sake of comparison, the following summary of the

vital statistics for the year 1904 compared with the last two years will be found interesting :—

	1904	1903	1902	
Birth rate	20	19·7	24·5	per 1,000 living.
Death rate.....	12·9	12	14·2	,,
Zymotic death rate ...	0	·3	0	,,
Respiratory death rate	·88	1·6	2·7	,,
Phthisis death rate ...	1·47	·6	·9	,,
Infantile death rate ...	73	0	123	per 1,000 born.

DISEASES PREVALENT DURING THE YEAR.

There is not much to be said under this head, as the year was remarkably free from serious sickness of any kind, and at no time was there the semblance of an epidemic after the outbreak of scarlatina, left over from the previous year, had subsided. Two cases of enteric or typhoid fever were reported, but both were shown to have been contracted outside the district. Twenty cases were notified under the Infectious Diseases Act 1889, against 25 in the year previous, and 18 in 1902. Four specimens from cases in which there was some doubt as to the diagnosis were forwarded to the Bacteriological Laboratory of the County Council, and reports were promptly received. There is no doubt that this department of the Medical Officer is most useful, as few medical men can devote the time necessary

for the delicate manipulations required in this work. Any medical man can have specimens examined free of charge, and a report returned within a few hours.

SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS.

The acquisition of the Grange Estate for central Council Offices would alone give a mark of distinction to the past year. Collected from the four corners into one building, the various departments will work more smoothly for the public benefit, and the formation of the grounds into a public garden will rescue the hub of the village from the builders' hand for ever. No great alteration in the sewerage system has been required in the past year, and for minor defects remedied I refer you to the excellent report of Mr. Hargreaves, your new surveyor and inspector, which is appended to this report. That hardy annual, the smell on the Menston road from the sewer from that village, should be felt no more, now that several tall ventilating shafts rise at intervals along the road. Another complaint, almost perennial, of the inadequacy of the sewerage of the Rose Bank—Elm Grove district still awaits the sanction of the Local Government Board for its remediation.

An important work awaiting your attention is the conversion of the present system of pail closets to that of water carriage. A beginning has been made, and I have reason to believe that the favourable terms which you offer

to owners of property will be from time to time accepted, and that gradually the whole of the village will be placed upon the more modern system. Fewer complaints than usual have been heard during the year ; but it is a more expensive system to work, and requires much supervision to prevent nuisance.

The water supply has been abundant and of excellent quality, and during the dry months of summer and autumn your foresight in acquiring the moorland reservoir met with its reward. A flushing tank, fed by the disused reservoir of the Spring Wood Beck, has been devised, so that in dry seasons the sewers can be flushed out and kept clean. This was needed, seeing that the bulk of the surface water is kept out of the main drain.

The workshops of the village have all been inspected in accordance with the Factory and Workshops Act, 1901. It has not been necessary to take any action, as every sanitary requirement of the Act of 1901 has been complied with.

An enquiry was held during the year by the Local Government Board on the question of the extension of the sewerage treatment area, which has become unequal to the strain upon it. The new proposals were considered satisfactory with modifications, and I hope the work will soon be completed.

The Isolation Hospital for Infectious Disease was opened June 1st. One case from this district has been sent to it.

The cow-sheds, milk-shops and dairies have been inspected, and found satisfactory. Underground bake-houses are unknown in the district, and the houses used as bakeries are all in good sanitary condition. We have but one slaughter-house in the village, and although its position in the main street is not an ideal one, no fault can be found with its sanitary condition nor the method of conducting the work.

The question of the County Sanatorium for Consumptives has not been prominently before us during the year, and it is to be hoped that before any irrevocable steps are taken a consensus of opinion from the medical profession of the county will be taken on the subject. In our fickle climate it is more than doubtful whether any permanent good can be done to the patients during the short period of each year during which the treatment could be tried ; and to raise hope in the patient, without any solid foundation of fulfilment is a policy which personally I should not advocate. There are places suitable for the treatment of phthisis, but they are not in Yorkshire ; and if public money is to be devoted to the assistance of the poorer class of consumptives, it would be better spent in encouraging emigration than in transient experiments at home. The disease requires a dry, warm and equable climate, free from dust, and with an abundance of ozone. Such conditions are not to be found in this neighbourhood, nor perhaps in Great Britain.

I include with mine the report of the Inspector of Nuisances, Mr. F. Hargreaves. Mr. Hargreaves has been with us but a short time, and has already gained the respect of everyone by the quiet unassuming manner in which he masters the various difficulties of his office. His report is a mere record of work done, but contains internal evidence of a large amount of careful attention to the needs of the village. Tables of statistics are also added showing at a glance the vital history of 1904.

In concluding this, my eighteenth annual report, I must apologise for its shortcomings, and trust that you will agree with me that in writings of this nature brevity is the soul of health.

I thank you, gentlemen, for many courtesies during the year.

I am, obediently yours,

HAROLD HEBBLETHWAITE,

Medical Officer of Health.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT,

YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 1904.

January 19th, 1905.

DEAR SIR,

I beg to submit the following report of work carried out during the year ending December 31st, 1904.

The 17 complaints which have been received during the year respecting defective drains have had the effect of causing the entire reconstruction of the drainage system of 12 houses, and partial reconstruction of the drainage of 3 houses, in addition to the laying of a new sewer and the building of 4 manholes. All new drains were inspected before being covered in.

The sewers and manholes throughout the district have from time to time been inspected, cleansed, and repairs done where necessary.

Nine new buildings have been certified as being fit for habitation. All buildings which have been erected during the year have been from time to time inspected.

The scavenging of the Village has been carried out by the Council's workmen, and while complaints as to negligence on their part have been very few, yet many complaints during the summer months were received, these being on account of the excreta tubs becoming dry, and consequently leaking. These were removed and replaced with galvanized iron pails as quickly as possible; and it is very desirable that a quantity of these iron pails should be in stock in readiness of any similar complaint next summer.

I am glad that the Council are now offering some substantial inducement to property-owners to convert existing pail closets to the W.C. system, and it is to be hoped that the Council may receive encouraging results from their endeavour to promote such a desirable degree of sanitation. During the last four months 7 closets have been so treated.

During the year 9 rooms have been disinfected for scarlet fever, the last of which was on February 19th.

The workshops have been inspected, and were found to comply with the requirements of the Factory and Workshops Act, 1901.

The cowsheds have had attention during the year, and were found to be in a fair condition. A few small matters required attention, and these were pointed out to the respective farmers, and verbal instructions given.

The water supply has received careful attention, and a continuous supply maintained. Many leakages have been

repaired and much work done to facilitate its distribution and prevent contamination.

In conclusion, I beg to thank you for the kindness and support you have been always ready to give in all matters of doubt and difficulty.

Yours obediently,

F. HARGREAVES.

DR. H. HEBBLETHWAITE,
Medical Officer of Health.

TABLE I.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1904 and previous Years.

Year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births.		Total Deaths Reg. in District.		Total Deaths in Public Institutions in District.	Deaths of non-residents registered in the District.	Deaths of residents registered beyond the District.	Nett Deaths at all Ages belonging to the District.	
		Number	Rate.*	Under 1 Year.	At all Ages.				Numbr.	Rate.*
				Number	Rate per 1,000 Births registrd.	Number	Rate.*			
1894	2700	82	30'3	8	97'3	39	14'4		36	13'2
1895	2730	66	24	10	151	50	17'8		55	20
1896	2800	76	27	10	131'5	48	17'1		47	16
1897	2825	82	29	3	36'5	20	7		25	8'8
1898	2850	79	27'7	8	101	38	13		36	12'2
1899	3000	66	22	12	181	38	12'6		36	12
1900	3100	75	24'2	11	146	54	17'4		53	17
1901	3310	86	26	6	44	40	12'1		36	10'9
1902	3300	81	24'5	10	123	49	14'5		49	14
1903	3310	65	19'7	2	30	54	14'8†	15	41	12
Averages for years 1894-1903.		75	25'4	8	104	44	14'5		41'4	13'6
1904	3400	68	20	5	73	57	13'4†	12	44	12'9

* Rates calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

† In these rates the inmates of the Scalebor Retreat are added to the estimated population.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1904.

Notifiable Disease.	At all ages.	Under 1 year.	1 to 5 years.	5 to 15 years.	15 to 25 years.	25 to 65 years.	65 and upwards.
Erysipelas	3	-	-	-	-	3	-
Scarlet Fever...	15	3	-	10	2	-	-
Enteric Fever...	2	-	-	-	1	1	-
Totals.....	20	3	0	10	3	4	0

CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH DURING YEAR 1904.

Causes of Death.	All ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and up- wards.
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis) ...	5	-	-	1	1	3	-
Other Tubercular Diseases	2	-	-	2	-	-	-
Cancer, malignant disease	8	-	-	-	-	5	3
Bronchitis	4	1	-	-	-	1	1
Pneumonia	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Alcoholism Cirrhosis of Liver) ..	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Premature Birth.....	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Heart Diseases	5	-	-	-	-	2	3
Brain and Nervous System	12	-	-	-	-	2	5
Old Age	8	-	-	-	-	-	7
Influenza	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
All other causes	7	3	-	-	-	3	-
All causes	57	5	0	3	1	16	20

Deaths in Public Institutions in the district:—

Bronchitis 1, Pneumonia 3, Brain and Nervous System 5,
Old Age 1, Influenza 1, other causes 1. Total 12.

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